

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

January 14, 2022

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave SE  
Washington, DC 20590

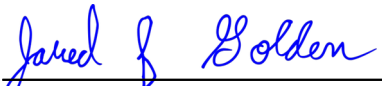
Dear Secretary Buttigieg:

We write in support of Maine Governor Janet Mills's requests in her letter to you dated November 5, 2021 related to "School Bus Driver Licensing Flexibilities." We have heard from constituents about how the workforce challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic are particularly dire for the school bus sector. Further, Maine people have told us that it is urgent to take any available actions to streamline the hiring process for school bus drivers in order to reduce shortages of these critical workers. Such actions include delaying the February 7th implementation date for the Entry-Level Driver Training (ELDT) requirements for school bus drivers and maintaining the waiver of the waiting period for school bus drivers taking the Commercial Driver's License (CDL) skills test.

The COVID-19 pandemic has hit both the education and transportation sectors especially hard, and this is distinctly true for the school bus drivers who bridge these two sectors. First, in 2020, extended suspensions of in-person learning reduced the work available for drivers, leading many to seek other jobs. Now that demand has returned, many school districts are facing short-staffed bus fleets, forcing difficult decisions about canceling bus routes, which undermine children's ability to access the educational opportunities they need and deserve. The federal government must work with states to grant temporary regulatory flexibilities to ease these pressures for school bus providers and drivers while continuing to ensure road safety.

We appreciate your attention to this matter and stand ready to work with you on solutions to these challenges for our students, families, school districts, and transportation companies.

Sincerely,



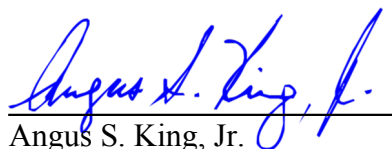
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Jared Golden  
Member of Congress



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Susan M. Collins  
United States Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Angus S. King, Jr.", written over a horizontal line.

Angus S. King, Jr.  
United States Senator

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Chellie R", written over a horizontal line.

Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress